

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

By the present amendment, claims 4, 18 and 26 have been amended. The allowance of claims 12-17, 32-38, and 44-48 is noted.

It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-11, 18-31, and 39-43 are allowable. Specifically, claim 1 recites an apparatus for supporting an endoscope that extends through a cannula for viewing a surgical site in a patient during surgery on the patient including a base for association with the cannula. The base has a guide portion. A first part is adapted to be fixed to the endoscope. A second part engages the guide portion and is movable relative to the guide portion. The first and second parts are movable together relative to the guide portion. A mechanism is connected between the base and the second part for moving the first and second parts relative to the guide portion to change a position of the endoscope relative to the patient. None of the prior art describes or suggests an apparatus as set forth in claim 1.

U.S. Patent No. 5,575,754 to Konomura describes an endoscopic apparatus having a retaining section 14 with a fixing screw 40 that can be screwed into a port 7 of a jet engine 6. A slide member 15 extends into a through hole 14a in the retaining section 14. A cylindrical fixing member 20 is rotatably fitted in a portion 15b of the slide member 15. A pin 22 fixed to the portion 15b of the slide member 15 extends into a groove 21 in the fixing member 20. The endoscope 1 passes through passages in the slide member 15, the fixing member 20 and the retaining section 14. The endoscope 1 is fixed to the fixing member 20 by a fixing ring 23. A rack 16 on a portion 15a of the slide member 15 meshes with a pinion 17 attached to the retaining section 14.

The Konomura patent does not describe or suggest an apparatus for supporting an endoscope that extends through a cannula for viewing a surgical site in a patient during surgery on the patient. The Konomura patent describes an endoscopic apparatus for use with a jet engine. Furthermore, the Konomura patent does not describe or suggest a base for association with a cannula. The retaining section 14 disclosed in the Konomura patent has a

fixing screw 40 that is screwed into a port 7 of a jet engine 6. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the specific recitations therein and for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 4 depends from claim 2 and has been amended to recite that the sleeve engages an outer surface of the cannula. Therefore, claim 4 is not indefinite and is also allowable.

Claims 5-7 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the specific recitations therein and for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 8 recites that the first part includes at least one rail member for slidably engaging a guide track of the second part. The Konomura patent describes a pin 22 fixedly connected to a slide member 15 and extending into a groove 21 in a fixing member 20. The fixing member 20 described in the Konomura patent does not include a rail for slidably engaging a guide track of the slide member 15. Thus, claim 8 is allowable.

Claims 9-11 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the specific recitations therein and for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 18 recites an apparatus for supporting an endoscope for viewing a surgical site in a patient during surgery on the patient. The endoscope extends through a cannula into the patient. The apparatus includes a base for supporting the endoscope. A sleeve receives the cannula. The base and the sleeve are relatively rotatable about an axis of the cannula. A sleeve retainer supports the sleeve and the base. The sleeve retainer includes a member press fit onto an end portion of the sleeve. None of the cited prior art describes or suggests an apparatus as set forth in claim 18.

As discussed above, the Konomura patent does not describe or suggest an apparatus for supporting an endoscope for viewing a surgical site in a patient during surgery on the patient with the endoscope extending through a cannula into the patient. The Konomura patent describes an endoscopic apparatus for use with a jet engine. Furthermore, the Konomura patent does not describe or suggest a sleeve for receiving a cannula. The fixing

member 20 described in the Konomura patent has an endoscope passage 20a through which an endoscope 1 extends. A cannula through which the endoscope 1 extends is not received in the passage 20a. The Konomura patent does not describe or suggest a sleeve retainer including a member press fit onto an end portion of a sleeve. The Konomura patent describes a pin 22 fixed to a slide member 15 and extending into a groove 21 in a fixing member 20 that is rotatable relative to the slide member. Accordingly, the pin 22 disclosed in the Konomura patent is not press fit into the groove 21 in the fixing member 20 since the fixing member moves relative to the pin.

U.S. Patent No. 6,530,880 to Pagliuca describes an apparatus 10 for supporting an endoscope 200 for viewing a surgical site in a patient during surgery on the patient. The endoscope 200 extends through a cannula 11. A base 118 includes a base portion 120 having a first platform or disk 124 and a second understructure or disk 125. An aperture 126 extends through the disks 124 and 125. A sleeve part 800 is secured to a cannula clamp 180 and is located in the aperture 126. A proximal end 22 of the cannula 11 can be inserted into and removed from the sleeve

part 800. A ball plunger 400 secures the sleeve part 800 to the base 118, the base portion 120, and the first and second disks 124 and 125. The ball plunger 400 includes a spherical detent member 420 in a radial bore 127b in the base 118. The detent member 420 is radially movable relative to the base 118 and extends into a recess 816 in the sleeve part 800 to form an indexing mechanism that secures the sleeve part 800 at selected angular increments relative to the base 118, the base portion 120, and the first and second disks 124 and 125. Accordingly, the disk 125 moves relative to the sleeve part 800 and the detent member 420 may be easily removed from the recess 816 in the sleeve part 800.

The Pagliuca patent does not describe or suggest a sleeve retainer for supporting a sleeve and a base and including a member press fit into an end portion of a sleeve. The detent member 420 disclosed in the Pagliuca patent is not press fit onto an end portion of the sleeve part 800. Thus, claim 18 is allowable.

Claims 19-25 depend from claim 18 and are allowable for the specific recitations therein and for the same reasons as claim 18.

Claim 26 recites an apparatus for supporting an endoscope for viewing a surgical site in a patient during surgery on the patient. The endoscope extends into a cannula and into the patient. The apparatus includes a base for supporting the endoscope. A sleeve receives the cannula. The base and the sleeve are relatively rotatable about an axis of the cannula. A support arm secures the sleeve to a support structure. The support arm includes a first portion for connection to the sleeve and a second portion for interconnecting the first portion and the support structure. The first portion includes an electrically insulating material electrically insulating the sleeve from the second portion. None of the cited prior art describes or suggests an apparatus as set forth in claim 26. Thus, claim 26 is allowable.

Claims 27-31 depend from claim 26 and are allowable for the specific recitations therein and for the same reasons as claim 26.

Claim 39 recites an apparatus for supporting an endoscope for viewing a surgical site in a patient during surgery on the patient. The endoscope extends through a cannula into the patient. The apparatus includes a base for

supporting the endoscope. A sleeve engages an outer surface of the cannula. The base and the sleeve are relatively rotatable about an axis of the cannula. The sleeve has an internal diameter that increases from an initial diameter as the cannula is inserted into the sleeve and that subsequently springs back toward the initial diameter so that the sleeve grips the cannula. None of the cited prior art describes or suggests an apparatus as set forth in claim 39.

U.S. Patent No. 4,854,301 to Nakajima describes an endoscope holding apparatus 181. A rotary frame 187 holding an endoscope 107 is rotatably fitted in a receiving frame 188. A rubber member 190 is provided on the inside surface of the rotary frame 187 to hold a large width operating part 112 of the endoscope 107 by friction.

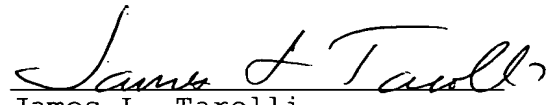
The Nakajima patent does not describe or suggest a sleeve for engaging an outer surface of a cannula through which an endoscope extends. The rubber member 190 described in the Nakajima patent engages a large width operating part 112 of an endoscope 107. Thus, claim 39 is allowable.

Claims 40-43 depend from claim 39 and are allowable for the specific recitations therein and for the same reasons as claim 39.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


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